



SIERRA CLUB



A Union of Professionals



CREDO CWA



LCLA
LABOR COUNCIL FOR LATIN AMERICAN ADVANCEMENT

DEMAND PROGRESS



Friends of the Earth
JOBS WITH JUSTICE



Columban Center
for Advocacy & Outreach



Institute for
Agriculture &
Trade Policy



Institute for
Policy Studies



PRIDE@WORK

JUST FOREIGN POLICY



Center for International
Environmental Law



For Immediate Release:
Dec. 13, 2017

Contact: Ufuoma Otu, (202) 454-5108, uotu@citizen.org
Cindy Carr, (202) 495-3034, cindy.carr@sierraclub.org

ADD YOUR ORG CONTACTS

Senator Bernie Sanders Headlines #ReplaceNAFTA Day-of-Action Event: Millions Nationwide Call for Successful Renegotiation to Eliminate Job Outsourcing Incentives, Add Strong Labor and Environmental Terms

Labor, Environmental, Faith, Consumer, Family Farm and Other Advocacy Groups and Activists Nationwide Drive Calls, Tweets and Emails to Congress During D.C. NAFTA Talks

Washington, D.C. — An event on Capitol Hill today launched the national #ReplaceNAFTA Day-of-Action during the last round of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) talks in 2017. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), U.S. Reps. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) and union and civil society leaders joined Americans nationwide calling, emailing and tweeting Congress to demand a successful renegotiation of NAFTA to eliminate its outsourcing incentives and add strong labor and environmental terms.

NAFTA renegotiations have reached a pivot point. Business lobby groups are urging Mexico and Canada to simply ignore U.S. proposals to cut NAFTA’s job outsourcing incentives and Buy American waiver and to limit Chinese content in NAFTA goods. The corporate strategy increases the prospects that talks deadlock and President Trump withdraws from NAFTA, which has authority to do in no small part because Congress has delegated large swaths of its constitutional trade authority to presidents in recent decades.

“The biggest economic challenge of our time is that people are in jobs that do not pay them enough to live on—and NAFTA has only exacerbated that problem by allowing companies to outsource American jobs and pay

workers even less,” said Rep. DeLauro. “That is why NAFTA must be rewritten to raise wages and level the playing field for workers. We cannot let corporate special interests write the rules once again and rig this trade agreement against workers.”

U.S. civil society groups and activists are urging the administration to eliminate NAFTA’s outsourcing incentives and add strong labor and environmental provisions that meet fundamental international standards, include swift and certain enforcement, and raise wages for all workers. Callers to Congress are demanding that a vote on a renegotiated NAFTA not be held until these essential standards are met.

Among key activities for this national NAFTA Day-of-Action and leading to it:

- On social media platforms, a **#ReplaceNAFTA Thunderclap action will reach more than 1.5 million people via Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr on the morning of Wednesday the 13th**.
- **More than 60 organizations are taking part in the #ReplaceNAFTA day of action, emailing more than 10 million people to drive constituent calls to every U.S. House and Senate office.**
- The ReplaceNAFTA campaign has organized **15 town halls and independent field hearings on NAFTA’s renegotiation across the country**, giving voice to displaced workers, family farmers, immigrants, small business owners and others demanding replacement of NAFTA with a deal that works for them, not just large corporations. **More than 400,000 Americans have signed ReplaceNAFTA petitions** demanding NAFTA’s corporate protections that promote job outsourcing be eliminated. The ReplaceNAFTA campaign has **675 people in 48 states doing boots-on-the-ground organizing**.
- The Sierra Club, the nation's largest grassroots environmental group with **over 3 million members and supporters**, is calling for a NAFTA replacement that protects people and planet, not corporate polluters. **Hundreds of thousands of supporters** participated in the call-in day, building on the more than **100,000** calls and messages Sierra Club members and supporters have already sent to Congress this year on NAFTA.
- Communications Workers of America activists are calling their Senators on the day of action to ask them to **hold U.S. trade negotiators to their promise that an updated NAFTA will raise standards and wages for workers in all three countries and stop providing incentives for multinational corporations to move jobs offshore**. CWA members from every state are actively engaged in the fight for trade agreements that make supporting working families and strengthening our communities a priority.

Almost one million U.S. jobs have been [certified](#) as lost to NAFTA, with more outsourced every week to Mexico where wages are 9 percent [lower](#) than before NAFTA and a tenth of what they are in the U.S. and Canada.

Statements from participating organizations:

"For millions of working families, NAFTA has meant lost jobs, closed factories and call centers, and lower wages, with most unable to find jobs that provide similar levels of pay and benefits. For communities, it’s meant a loss of important public services and cuts in education and other programs as employers abandon cities and towns to relocate out of the country.” said Chris Shelton, president, Communications Workers of America. “CWA members understand what's at stake, and that's why we are leading the fight to make sure that a new NAFTA works for workers.”

“Americans have had enough with trade deals that make it easier to outsource jobs to wherever workers are the most exploited and environmental regulations are the weakest,” said Arthur Stamoulis, executive director of

Citizens Trade Campaign. “It’s time to replace NAFTA with a new agreement that prioritizes the creation of good-paying jobs, the protection of human rights and increased wages for all working people. Central to that is ending NAFTA’s outsourcing incentives, and the addition of labor and environmental provisions that are based on fundamental international standards and include swift and certain enforcement.”

“Across the political spectrum, Americans reject the status quo of NAFTA helping corporations outsource more jobs to Mexico every week and attack health and environmental safeguards in secretive tribunals. We are fight for a new deal that cuts NAFTA’s job-outsourcing incentives and corporate tribunals and adds strong labor and environmental terms to level the playing field,” said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch. “The corporate lobby is urging Mexico and Canada to not engage on U.S. proposals to improve NAFTA, which increases the prospects that talks deadlock and President Trump withdraws.”

“Congress must ensure that NAFTA renegotiations are used to stop the ongoing bleeding from NAFTA while also adding new protections for our environment, creating jobs and raising wages,” said CREDO Political Director Murshed Zaheed. “If phony populist Donald Trump gets his way, NAFTA renegotiations will hand over even more power and wealth to the super-rich and out-of-control mega-corporations.”

“National Farmers Union and its 200,000 farm and ranch families support a renegotiated NAFTA that preserves duty free market access for agricultural goods with Canada and Mexico, but fixes the flawed framework that has created a substantial trade deficit,” said Roger Johnson, president, NFU. “Such an agreement should reinstate country-of-origin labeling (COOL) on meat and other food products and should only contain dispute settlement processes that are consistent with the U.S. judicial system.”

"People will not stand by and let Donald Trump trade away their jobs, wages, climate, air, and water to the highest corporate bidder," said Ben Beachy, Sierra Club's Responsible Trade Program director. "To avoid the fate of the corporate-backed Trans-Pacific Partnership, NAFTA's replacement must reverse the outsourcing of jobs and pollution and protect workers and communities across borders by requiring swift enforcement of core international labor, environmental, and climate standards."

“A renegotiated NAFTA must take concrete steps to raise labor and environmental standards throughout the continent,” said Peter Knowlton, president, United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America. “It must increase Mexican workers’ wages and eliminate repressive labor laws, including so-called “Right to Work” laws in the U.S.”

“NAFTA has failed farmers in all three of its partner countries - the U.S. Canada and Mexico - all the while lining the pockets of large-scale corporate agribusiness,” said Juliette Majot, executive director, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. “At its very essence, trade is meant to improve the livelihoods of people residing in all partner countries. NAFTA never has. It is time for a new approach to trade aimed at ensuring fair prices to farmers and fair working conditions and livelihoods for farmworkers.”

"As NAFTA renegotiations continue it is more important than ever that we work together to find solutions to trade that protect workers, the environment, and the common good," said Patrick Carolan, executive director, Franciscan Action Network. "Rather than having a trade deal that benefits corporations looking to make a profit or gain more power we must find ways to protect the most vulnerable that are in the best interests of workers, public health, and the environment."

"NAFTA renegotiations need to be taken very seriously. They represent an opportunity to do what's right. We can eliminate incentives for companies to leave the United States and move jobs overseas, while strengthening the Labor and Environmental side-agreements, turning them into something enforceable with teeth," said Dr. Gabriela Lemus, president, Progressive Congress Action Fund. "NAFTA has greatly disrupted workers' lives in all three countries- this is our opportunity to fix it."

"The underlying crisis afflicting rural America---rural poverty--is a result of federal agriculture, dairy, food and trade policies that do not provide farmers a fair price that cover our costs of production," said Brenda Cochran, a Pennsylvania dairy farmer. "Farmers do not need NAFTA--we need a fair price--and NAFTA should be terminated unless farmers and workers are paid fairly."

"The underlying crisis afflicting rural America---rural poverty--is a result of federal agriculture, dairy, food and trade policies that do not provide farmers a fair price that cover our costs of production," said Brenda Cochran, a Pennsylvania dairy farmer with Progressive Agriculture Organization, a member organization of the National Family Farm Coalition. "Farmers do not need NAFTA--we need a fair price--and NAFTA should be terminated unless farmers and workers are paid fairly."

"Trade agreements have human consequences. For more than 20 years, NAFTA has devastated Mexico's most vulnerable communities. People have been pushed out of their homes by economic, labor, and environmental factors and forced to migrate in order to survive," said Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, executive director, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice. "This renegotiation gives us an opportunity to address the desperate need for better agricultural policies as well as stricter labor and environmental guidelines. The U.S. should approach these negotiations with respect for human dignity. The effects of NAFTA transcend the economy and deeply affect the lives of people who need the benefits of trade the most. We must set things right for our communities; it is the faithful way forward."

Organizations Participating in the #ReplaceNAFTA Day of Action Include:

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)	Jobs with Justice
Alcohol Justice	Just Foreign Policy
Alliance for Global Justice	Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)
California Trade Justice	National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC)
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc. (CDM)	National Farmers Union (NFU)
Center for International Environmental Law	NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Citizens Trade Campaign	NH Labor News
Columban Advocacy	No Maiz Gringo
Common Frontiers	Occupy the SEC
Communication Workers of America (CWA)	Oregon AFL-CIO
Connecticut State Council of Machinists	Oregon Fair Trade
CREDO	Our Revolution
CT Fair Trade Coalition	Occupy Wall Street Special Projects Affinity Group
Demand Progress	Pennsylvania Council of Churches Ministry of Public Witness
Democracy for CT	Pride At Work
Fair World Project	Progress for All
Family Farm Defenders	Public Citizen
Friends of the Earth	Question your Shrimp
Global Exchange	Replace NAFTA
Global Progressive Hub	Rock County Progressives
Good Jobs Nation	Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center
Greater Boston Trade Justice	Sierra Club
Green America	South Florida LCLAA
IBEW Local 1837	Southeast Minnesota Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy	SumOfUs
Institute for Policy Studies	Teamsters
International Association of Machines and Aerospace Workers	350 Seattle
District Lodge 26	United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE)
International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF)	United Steelworkers (USW)
Iowa99Media	Washington Fair Trade Coalition

Witness for Peace

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom